Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 TRSE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-04 CEA-01 IO-13 /101 W

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PASS TREASURY

MANILA FOR US ADB

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EAID

SUBJECT: EC COMMISSION STAFF CONCERNED OVER ADB HANDLING OF EC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS

REF: (A) 76 EC BRUSSELS 12214, (B) EC BRUSSELS 12140 (C) EC BRUSSELS 12070, (D) MANILA 19081

1. COMMISSION OFFICIALS EXPRESS CONCERN OVER THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK'S HANDLING OF THE \$1.9 MILLION EC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT TO THE BANK LAST YEAR. THE EC HAS AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE BANK'S STAFF THAT FIRST PREFERENCE FOR TENDERS FINANCED BY THE GRANT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ADB DEVELOPING COUNTRY MEMBERS AND EC COUNTRIES. DESPITE THIS UNDERSTANDING, COMMISSION OFFICIALS SAY THAT A CONTRACT WAS AWARDED TO A JAPANESE CONSULTING FIRM FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A PROPOSED PROJECT IN BANGLADESH, EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE REPORTEDLY EQUALLY COMPETITIVE BIDS BY FRENCH AND UK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FIRMS. THIS EXPERIENCE TENDS TO CONFIRM COMMISSION SUSPICIONS THAT THE ADB IS TOO CLOSELY TIED TO JAPANESE INTERESTS AND EUROPEAN FIRMS DO NOT RECEIVE EQUITABLE CONSIDERATION

2. COMMISSION STAFF OFFICIALS ARE RECOMMENDING THAT THE EC RELY PRIMARILY ON BILATERAL AID CHANNELS FOR

DISPERSING ITS AID TO ASIAN COUNTRIES. THEY PLAN, HOWEVER, TO CONTINUE TO GRANT A MODEST AMOUNT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MONIES THROUGH THE ADB BECAUSE THE COMMISSION LACKS THE STAFF TO ADMINISTER THE SMALL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE STUDIES WHICH THE ADB IS CARRYING OUT, HOWEVER, COMMISSION OFFICIALS PLAN TO FINANCE MAJOR AID PROJECTS IN ASIA DIRECTLY RATHER THAN THROUGH THE ADB. HINTON

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